

Thames Barrier
Park



London Borough of Newham
Barrier Point Road, off North Woolwich
Road, London E16 2HP.
Tel: (0207) 476 3741;
www.thamesbarrierpark.org.uk

On N bank of River Thames, between
North Woolwich Road and Thames Barrier
in Silvertown. Nearest underground
station Canning Town; Docklands Light
Railway (DLR), Pontoon Dock; mainline
station North London Line, Silverlink
service between Richmond and North
Woolwich Silvertown. Buses 69, 474

Open all year – telephone or consult
website for details

Entrance: free

Other information: No direct access
between park on north bank and
information and learning centre on south
bank, and no public access to Thames
Barrier structure itself from either location



Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL.
www.vam.ac.uk

On Cromwell Road, close to South
Kensington underground station

THAMES BARRIER PARK ★

This exciting modern park, opened in 2000, is at once a brave act of regeneration and a landscaping *tour de force*. The distinguished French designers Alain Provost and Alain Cousseran of Groupe Signes teamed up with English architects Patel Taylor and engineers Ove Arup to transform a contaminated brownfield site into a 22-acre park on the north bank adjacent to the river's most significant modern work of engineering, the giant stainless-steel 'cockleshells' of the Thames Flood Prevention Barrier. The river promenade gives a setting to the Barrier, and a raised walkway opens up views along and over the river. The flatness of the high-level plateau emphasises its spaciousness – think ten or more football pitches of lawns and wildflower meadows framed by bands of shrubs and interspersed with broad mown paths. The greatest surprise and pleasure is, however, the Green Dock, the largest sunken garden in London. Stretching the length of the park, this simulation of a marine dock is a glorious, accessible garden dug deep and crossed by two viewing bridges. Look down and the planting is a tidal flow of wave-cut hedges alternating with beds of perennials. Although the park has been bedevilled by problems with the fountain plaza, this has now been restored and the water jets plays once more.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM (The John Madejski Garden)

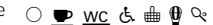
When Kim Wilkie was asked to create a new garden for the V&A, he opted for a simple, elegant, flexible design, replacing the current row

of trees by just two liquidambar to make the facade of the museum more clearly visible. At the centre is an elliptical sunken stone area rather like a Roman bath, which can be flooded or drained at will. There are stone steps around the edge for people to sit on and water jets at the end. Specially designed planters containing lemon trees (replaced in winter by hollies) stand at the margins of grass; others around the perimeter hold colourful herbaceous perennials. A tranquil daytime garden can be transformed at the blink of an eye into a sparkling evening party space.

Open all year – telephone or consult
website for details

Entrance: free

Other information: Refreshments during
summer only. Music, wine, food and
lectures, etc. available on Fri evening
openings (seasonal) – telephone 020
7942 2000 for details



OTHER RECOMMENDED PUBLIC PARKS AND GARDENS

BARBICAN CONSERVATORY

The Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS
(020 7638 4141/8891; www.barbican.org.uk). Open all
year – telephone or consult website for details

The conservatory houses a lush jungle of some
2000 species of temperate and semi-tropical plants,
many of them recognisable as common house plants
grown gigantic, and ponds swimming with large
carp. Outside, there are trees and flowers, pools
and fountains on every level of the walkways, and
in summer most of the balconies on the lower rise
buildings are a riot of colour, giving the lie to the
idea of this listed 1960s development as a bleak and
charmless place.

BONNINGTON SQUARE PLEASURE GARDEN

Off Langley Lane, Vauxhall, London SW8 1TE
(www.bonningtonsquare.org.uk). Open all year – consult
website for details

A good example of a public space where residents
working with the local authority have been able to put
their stamp on the environment with lush planting.
Containers of all shapes and sizes, window boxes
and tiny spaces (once paving stones) now abound
with trees and flowers. The small pleasure garden,
with its large industrial water wheel, sub-tropical
foliage and secluded seating areas, was designed and
is maintained by residents. Behind 37 Bonnington
Square is the wonderful and secret *Harleyford Road
Community Garden*, where a network of mosaic paths
winding among trees and flowers.

CAMLEY STREET NATURAL PARK

12 Camley Street, London NW1 0PW (020 7833 2311;
www.wildlondon.org.uk). Open all year – telephone or
consult website for details

A tranquil landscaped nature reserve filled with birds,
insects and wildlife. Follow the winding path through
2 acres of meadow, ponds and woodland glade where
more than 460 species of mainly native plants are
kept in delicate balance.

COLLEGE GARDEN

Westminster Abbey, London SW1P 3PA
(020) 7222 5152; www.westminster-abbey.org). Open
all year – telephone or consult website for details

The one-acre garden, thought to be the oldest in
England and under continuous cultivation for more
than 900 years, was a busy place in the 15th century,
with two ponds, fruit trees, a kitchen garden, meadow
and an all-important herb garden where the monks
tended their medicinal plants. Now it is mainly laid
to lawn, with a few fruit trees and herbs around the
edge as reminders of its roots, and some fine London
planes and a fig tree planted in the 19th-century.

FULHAM PALACE

Bishop's Avenue, London SW6 6EA (020 7736 3233;
www.fulhampalace.org). Open all year – telephone or
consult website for details

A place of faded grandeur, steeped in history, with
sweeping lawn and venerable trees, including a holm
oak estimated to be over 500 years old. The box-
edged herb garden, dating from 1828, is enclosed
by a pergola supporting a magnificent 100-year-old
wisteria. (Listed Grade II*)